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# THE SCHOOL REVIEW

A JOURNAL OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

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VOLUME XXV

SEPTEMBER 1917

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NUMBER 7

## THE JUNIOR COLLEGE AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE PUBLIC-SCHOOL SYSTEM<sup>1</sup>

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The junior-college idea is in no sense a Procrustes-bed, and its advocates have nothing in common with that legendary highwayman of Attica; yet this bed suggests several very broad questions—questions inseparable from the junior-college movement as a whole. One is: Shall certain colleges have their heads cut off, and, if so, by whom? Another is: Shall the American university-college have its legs cut off, and, if so, where? The third is: Shall the American four-year high schools be stretched, and, if so, how? Now, it seemed wisest for me to relegate the first two of these questions and all that goes with them to the margin of consciousness and to focus attention on the junior college as an affirmative answer to the third and hence as a new member of an evolving public—or, more precisely, state—school system. In doing so I shall acquire merit, I hope, by drawing largely on California for object-lesson material, letting you, if you will, look after the *mutatis mutandis* applications.

We are not likely, I take it, to see the junior college “steadily and see it whole,” unless we avoid entangling alliances with notions

<sup>1</sup> An address given at the conference of the University of Chicago with secondary schools, April 10, 1917.

and loyalties sprung from usage or with educational theory without a country, and choose, instead, as angle of vision, the common good of American democracy. From this point of view we cannot but be helpfully directed by the postulates and working principles implied. We start, then, with the idea that the school system is an organ of the body politic, bone of its bone, flesh of its flesh, an organ devised for each and all, from generation to generation. Its structure must needs therefore be shaped so that, as time goes on, more and more adequate recognition may be given to the educational rights of both the minority and the majority of child-citizens—that, in other words, provision may be made, not only for length and continuity, but also for breadth and completeness, of educational opportunities. Its supreme function accordingly becomes that of insuring, with increasing certainty, the greatest preparedness of the greatest number, the concept preparedness including, in this connection, becoming, doing, being, singly and collectively, but excluding whatever would degrade a human being to a mere means or device and would prevent the making of a life worthy of freemen. But to have it function thus continuously presupposes capacity for further and continuous development, for peaceful adaptations to new occasions and the new duties they teach. Otherwise it soon begins to minister to the quick as if they were the dead, and itself becomes a case of *rigor mortis*. To have it function thus continuously presupposes such correlation of parts as to reduce the danger of functional troubles to a minimum, provided this living unity in variety does not mean an enlightened despotism within or without, or lack of chances for a social group to make blunders, to get what it deserves, and so to learn to do better. Democracy's choice is like Lessing's choice of the search for truth rather than truth as a gift. The process of becoming efficient is to be preferred to efficiency for its own sake. It follows from all this that the school phases of social evolution can be adequately dealt with only by a state-schoolcraft that combines farsight and foresight with evolutionary thought and practice. Not wanted is the conservatism of Lot's wife, the original "standpatter," nor the radicalism devoid of historic sense. What is wanted is, in a word, teleological opportunism, which has ample room for temperamental

differences as to speed. The etymological meaning of the term *pedagogue* needs to be Americanized into that of *leading citizen*, with the connotation that such a one is aggressively alive to the inherent purpose of democracy: to form a more perfect union of educational effort; to establish justice as to educational opportunities; to insure domestic tranquillity for the parts and the whole of the state's educational institutions; to provide for the common defense against all enemies of the child-citizen; to promote the general welfare, not by perverting young Americans into textbooks, papery inside and leathery outside, but by advancing them by means of school subjects and school life in preparedness as to personal freedom and loyal co-operative service.

When we fit the foregoing considerations into the general theory of education; when we thereupon examine those critics who think with their heads and thus give out light as well as heat; when we then watch the many adaptive changes going on and try to interpret their trend and significance, the need of reshaping the inherited school system—if an accident of history deserves to be called a system—into an organ adequate to the functions demanded by the twentieth century becomes convincingly obvious. Nor is it difficult then to project through the fixed points of the past and present the main lines of reconstruction and to arrive thereby at a rational hypothesis for direction and action—a hypothesis, moreover, that does not involve laying violent hands on anything but a few custom-caked prepossessions. Basing my best knowledge and belief largely on data derived from the situation I know best at first hand, I would read the shadows of coming events and sketch the completed readjustment and extension as follows:

1. The state university, embodying in a higher indissoluble union German and English university aims, rests on a foundation of fourteen grades of elementary and secondary education, its first two years corresponding to the last two of the four-year college. It retains the last two years of secondary education, but for a gradually diminishing number of students.

2. For city and country alike the elementary-school period ends with the sixth grade; not so, however, the period of compulsory school attendance.

3. For city and country alike the elementary grades are followed normally by three intermediate grades, designed for the years of early adolescence and adjusted to the educational needs of all pupils, be their school life long or short. For the country this presupposes the county as the unit of educational organization and administration.

4. For city and country alike provision has been made for education and training to the end of the secondary-school period, i.e., to the end of the fourteenth grade. Here again the county unit is presupposed.

5. The lower vocational system, comprising a variety of arrangements for training, is articulated with the intermediate school; the middle vocational system with the high school. To the middle vocational system belong the normal schools and the various vocational departments of junior colleges.

6. As far as the institutional grouping of the secondary grades is concerned, the old rigidity has been superseded by flexibility. One city or county, for example, may follow a 6-3-3-2 plan; another may have the grouping 6-2-4-2; a third may have a 6-4-4 division. According to local conditions, one community may have only the intermediate school, articulated, to be sure, with a high school elsewhere; another the intermediate and high-school grades, articulated, to be sure, with a junior college elsewhere; a third may provide for an eight-year secondary school in one place and under one management, and so on.

Being interested in reporting rather than arguing, I can do nothing at this point for the doubting Thomases or the Missourians. I can only affirm that in California, at any rate, the hypothesis or program thus crudely outlined accords essentially with professional public opinion. None other looks like something "just as good." If various committee reports and their acceptance by bodies of teachers may be trusted at all; if the attitude of the universities, particularly of their departments of education, is significant; if the policies of the state department mean anything for the future, substantial agreement exists as to the goal to be achieved. Whether it will be reached, and how soon, is, of course, a question concerning which one must heed Hosea Biglow's warning: "Don't prophesy

unless ye know." At present the omens are auspicious. The following glimpses of the situation may serve to illustrate this fact and at the same time bring to our minds the chief conditioning factors in the development of junior colleges.

1. To begin with, the intermediate school is being institutionalized city by city at a reasonable rate of speed. It is sanctioned by law and approved by the state board, which has provided for an intermediate teacher's certificate. Only a few counties have as yet availed themselves of their constitutional privilege to adopt charters, but the tendency is in that direction. It seems likely, moreover, that the rural intermediate school can be had sooner through specific mandatory legislation, making the county the unit of educational administration. The bearing of such legislation on the solution of rural-life problems is too obvious to be seen only by schoolmen.

2. The high schools of the state, now over 280 in number, have attained a stage of development that warrants an upward extension both in the larger cities and in the wealthier rural high-school districts. The state contributes \$15 per pupil; each county \$60 more. Less than 30 high schools have only 3 teachers; the average is about 12. For teachers of the traditional branches the standard of certification is one year of graduate university study, including professional training; for teachers of the newer special subjects, the equivalent of four years of preparation beyond the four-year high school. The state board has recently adopted a plan whereby all high-school teachers come under state supervision during the first two years of service.

3. It is coming to be generally understood that the attempts to pour the new wine of vocational training into the old skins of organization and method are destined to be futile. With this goes the growing conviction that the training for specialized efficiency cannot wisely be substituted for the general education for which the intermediate school and the high school must continue to stand. Foundation courses in both, yes; finishing courses, no; instead, vocational projections and continuations.

4. Since 1892 the state university has been gradually reshaping itself around two organizing ideas. One was and is that, for

theoretical and practical considerations alike, the university proper should begin in the middle of the inherited four-year college scheme; the second was and is that the work of the first two years is as a matter of history and fact all of a piece with secondary education. This trend of thought and preaching and practice resulted *gradatim* in the junior certificate, to mark the distinction between university and secondary education; in the policy of placing all professional schools on a basis of not less than two years of non-professional training; in making the studies of the last two years of the high school and the first two of the college largely interchangeable; and last, but not least, in publicly exhibiting the requirements for the junior certificate in terms of unified secondary curricula covering Grades 9-14, inclusive. In ways of her own, Leland Stanford Junior University, under the leadership first of Dr. Jordan and now of Dr. Wilbur, stands committed to virtually the same policy. Thus the precept and example of the two universities prepared the way for the collegiate extension of the public high school, and the junior colleges that have sprung into existence or will do so may rely on the continued support and co-operation of these two institutions.

5. The first junior colleges were established under the law of 1907, which gave high-school districts permission to introduce post-graduate courses. A year ago the State Council of Education adopted the following recommendations: (1) that the legislature explicitly recognize the junior college as an integral part of the secondary-school system; (2) that the legislature permit the establishment of a junior college only where the assessed valuation of taxable property is such as will support adequately, first of all, the elementary, the intermediate, and the traditional high-school grades, and, secondly, a two-year junior college—in other words, that the law safeguard the equitable distribution of money for educational purposes and prevent the multiplication of well-meant but doomed attempts at junior colleges; (3) that the legislature authorize counties to establish junior colleges, either as additions to existing county or district high schools or as separate institutions.

Bills embodying these recommendations have been drafted by the Commissioner of Secondary Education, and there is every reason

to believe that they will be enacted into law at the present session of the legislature. If so, several over-ambitious communities will have to be content with a policy of watchful waiting, but there will remain, as nearly as I can determine, about fifteen junior colleges that meet the legal requirements for their life, liberty, and happiness.

When we review the ground traversed thus far, the rise and progress of the junior college appears as an integral phase of a country-wide movement toward a more adequate state system of education. In California, as elsewhere, the junior college is causally connected with the other constituent phases of the whole process of reorganization. In California, as elsewhere, its evolution is determined by the convergence and coalescence of three currents of educational endeavor. The first is directed toward an intelligent adjustment of the university, in the Continental European sense, to the traditional American college. This process, it may be taken for granted, will result in the general absorption by the university of the last two years of the inherited four-year college. And this necessarily implies the practical recognition of the first two years as the continuation and culmination of secondary education. The second is directed toward making the high school function more effectively, for all alike, during the whole period of adolescence. Now the high school begins too late and ends too early. The result is a truncated and non-functioning education for most high-school graduates. The third is directed toward increasing the efficiency or preparedness of the nation through the creation of lower and middle systems of vocational training. For reasons too obvious to rehearse, the school must furnish such training, first, for those whose education for general social efficiency is not prolonged beyond the first eight or nine grades; secondly, for those whose general education ends with the eleventh or twelfth grade and who are not headed for one of the professions, in the restricted sense.

It is, of course, an inevitable phase of growth that as yet not one of the junior colleges I know about has fully found itself. Growing-pains cannot be escaped. Even a butterfly has to spend its infancy and youth as a caterpillar. But even now the uncertainties that



exist relate rather to ways and means than to fundamental conception and aim. The coming of the junior college means that the high school is taking possession of its own, the university-college continuing—presumably for many years to come—to give two years of secondary education also. Accordingly, the junior college, in order to promote the general welfare, which is the sole reason for its existence, cannot make preparation for the university its excuse for being. Its courses of instruction and training are to be culminal rather than basal. The real differences between the collegiate and the four-year part of a full-grown high school are not due to any other institution. They exist because the students of the college division have normally passed the middle point of adolescence; they exist, further, not because some will attend a university, but because the majority will presumably not do so. They are precisely analogous to those which give a special character to the intermediate school. And so the junior college will function adequately only if its first concern is with those who will go no farther, if it meets local needs efficiently, if it enables thousands and tens of thousands to round out their general education, if it turns an increasing number into vocations for which training has not hitherto been afforded by our school system. Hence it will of necessity be as nearly autonomous as its place in the public-school system of the state permits; hence, too, its structure will normally have to exhibit a bifurcation into vocational and cultural departments, both organically united with what precedes.

When I am asked about junior-college vocational departments, my advice, for good or ill, is: develop two in each junior college—one for home-making and women's occupations other than teaching; the other for civic efficiency, especially for the careers, even now in the making, within the broad fields of city, county, and state administration. Beyond this develop vocational departments designed to meet more localized needs. A rural junior college would naturally, therefore, make provision for training in practical scientific farming. In industrial centers the emphasis would fall on technological branches. Commercial centers would organize a junior-college preparation for business. In every case opportunities would exist for combining schooling with calling. No national preparedness program, I venture to assert, can be

satisfactory that does not purpose to fill the gap between the training of the artisan and the university expert and that does not propose to fill this gap for as many as possible by as wide a distribution of opportunities as possible. A special reason why the professional departments of universities should further this consummation lies in the strong probability that these departments would then be relieved of thousands whose attendance is owing not so much to mistaken ambition as to the absence of other means of vocational training. A very similar benefit would, of course, accrue to the normal schools.

Thus far only one of the California junior colleges—the Polytechnic Junior College of Los Angeles—has developed well-organized vocational finishing courses—for rather obvious reasons, such as the absence of blazed trails, as far as organization is concerned, the comparatively large outlay of money required, the predominantly academic interests of the high-school teachers and principals initiating the local propaganda for a junior college, the comparative ease with which the suggestion can be made to work in communities that the university is coming to their town, etc. In some instances the argument that the junior college would keep much money at home and would, for individuals, cut college expenses nearly in two has proved more efficacious than any other. In short, while efforts are now being made in several places to organize vocational courses, the junior colleges continue to offer to a greatly varying extent only the lower-division studies of a college of liberal arts. As soon, however, as the legislation referred to above is secured—within the next few weeks—making the junior college the capstone of secondary education and assuring to it \$75 per student from county and state, projects for vocational training are bound to loom larger than they have done hitherto. Nor is it unlikely that sooner or later the state will adopt the recommendation of the State Council of Education to the effect that the state high-school tax be increased for the specific purpose of furthering the development of vocational departments in junior colleges.

As long as an organic correlation of part and part can be brought about and maintained, latitude in the grouping or segregation of secondary grades is of far greater value than uniformity. Local

conditions, for example, may well make it necessary, if not wholly desirable, to establish a junior college by itself. Here and there it may be found most practicable to assign the tenth as well as the ninth grade to the intermediate school and then to make the eleventh and twelfth grades constituent parts of the junior college. Plans of this sort are actually under serious consideration in Los Angeles and Sacramento. The typical junior college, however, will doubtless continue to consist of a two-year addition to an existing high school—an addition more or less intimately united with it as to aims, organization and administration, teaching staff, and school community life. At present three tendencies are noticeable with reference to this problem of correlation. One is to separate the junior college as far as possible from the high school, to create as fast as possible a special faculty, to develop exclusive forms of student activities, to emphasize the methods in vogue in universities, and so on. Another is to differentiate as little as possible—that is, to treat the junior college merely as a high school lengthened by two years. According to a third view the advantages of both types of organization can be secured and the disadvantages of each largely avoided by applying the principle of unity in variety. A special faculty, yes, but not one without a share in the work of the grades below the collegiate division; one principal, yes, but also a junior-college dean; unity and continuity of program, yes, but also the attitudes and methods suitable for young manhood and womanhood; a distinct college life, yes, but not an isolated, separate one, least of all a pinchbeck imitation of the large university-college. The San Diego Junior College may serve as a good illustration. It is this inclusive third view, it seems to me, that does justice to all of the factors involved and that should, therefore, serve as a guide in working out the many new and perplexing problems of instruction, of administration, and of student life.

It is too early as yet to dwell at length on the relation of the junior college to its envioning community and on the extramural services it will render as a center of educative influences. But there can be little doubt as to its wider mission, particularly in a state where the landscape is not dotted with small private colleges. There is the call to initiative and co-operation within its circle of

intermediate and high schools. There is the need of furthering clearer community thought and the advance toward the highlands of civic life. There is the challenge to assist in making university extension really worth while by making it largely supplementary to junior-college extension, and so forth. The old functions of the college of fifty years ago, discharged in modern ways; the new functions called for by modern insights and needs added—such may well be the substance of things not seen but hoped for.

In view of the mission of the junior college to do new and better things in new and better ways, the selection of the teaching staff becomes a matter of supreme importance. Archaic, second-hand teachers will not do. One requirement to be insisted on is a degree of mature and modern scholarship not lower than that found in junior colleges directly connected with universities. If such scholarship is at the same time more human and less neo-scholastic, all the better. Roughly measured, this requirement will be found to call for not less than two years of graduate university preparation. Of course an equivalent in terms of mastery without such university aid should always be more than acceptable. Degrees do not matter; the essential thing is to be sure-footed in the ways of the scholar. Another *sine qua non* is an ample measure of the liberal culture that embodies the spirit of service, informed by broad scholarship and inclusive appreciations. A mere specialist may do no great harm in a university; in a junior college with its man-centered aims his ways would lead to destruction. Normally a Ph.D. applying for a junior-college position should be asked to present a certificate of rebirth. A third is, of course, teaching power of a high order, demonstrated, not only in the course of professional training, but also in the secondary grades below those of the junior college. Whatever universities may continue to do, practice-teaching on junior-college students is out of the question. Such power includes, not only ability to teach young men and women by an adequate use of instruction material, but also directive insight into the principles of secondary education and into the place and functions of the junior college as a part of the state school system. Of course no such standard can be applied at once. The present situation is analogous to the beginnings of university work

in colleges, which at first had to rely largely on existing faculties. Here and there junior-college courses are attempted by instructors whose specialty lies elsewhere. Here and there, too, a department head insists on doing what one of his assistants could do better. But the tendency, I am glad to report, is strongly toward the higher qualifications outlined, so that meanwhile the universities need not fear a lowered standard. At the University of California the scholarship average of those coming from junior colleges is found to be several fractions higher than the general university average—a fact not wholly accounted for, to be sure, by the scholarly fitness of junior-college teachers. The junior-college year is longer by at least a month. Hitherto classes have been small. They have been homogeneous and so have been able to start in on a higher level than is possible for the heterogeneous mass of university-college Freshmen. They have been in charge, not of the least, but of the most, experienced teachers of their respective institutions. They have been less exposed to university “side shows.” They have come to their university life and work with great expectations, with freshness and enthusiasm. Nor should we overlook the general tonic effect of the junior-college idea upon high-school men and women. There is inspiration in the thought that the professional elevator need not stop running at the twelfth-grade floor. To this stimulus the state university, a year ago, added another, on the recommendation of the School of Education. It established a higher professional degree, the high-school certificate, obtained at the end of one year of graduate study, being regarded as the equivalent of a first or lower professional degree. The following conditions must be met: (1) four years or more of successful teaching experience; (2) a total of two years of residence graduate work distributed so that one-third goes to the department of education, another to some other university department, the remaining third of the work being subject only to the general proviso that all of the courses needed for the degree must be advanced; (3) an acceptable professional thesis dealing from the educational point of view with some problem of consequence.

The response has been most gratifying despite the fact that the label, tentatively chosen, namely, Graduate in Education, has

nothing of the iridescence of the Ph.D. Indeed, the hope is fully justified that before long junior-college faculties will be increasingly recruited from those who have reached this new milestone, or the spot marked by it. Unless some unforeseen upheaval prevents, the State Board of Education is likely to prescribe a junior-college certificate, with requirements similar to those I have been discussing.

Now, finally, what of the relation of the public junior college to the state university-college? Obviously the latter may make it or mar it, for until the state shall create a directive educational organ the state university will not only continue to be guide, philosopher, and friend in all educational matters, but will also continue to have a large measure of extra-legal power. Such a position constitutes a public trust, to which the university must be said to be faithless if it does not make its fostering care and leadership all-inclusive; worse still, of course, if it subserves its supposedly special interests at the expense of the public welfare as a whole. And so, when the junior colleges come seeking the aid and institutional recognition indispensable to their rise and progress, it would be as immoral as it would be easy for a state university to bend them to its uses. But, even if the state universities should readily consent to these self-evident truths, are they in a condition fit for mutually beneficent relations of affiliation? Is it not very naïve to assume that the organization and management of the college part of these institutions are controlled by college consciousness? Seen from the viewpoint of an educational institution, the lower half of what was once the college appears often to be neither educational nor institutional. We behold a conglomerate of departments pursuing a hodgepodge of aims. In one department the student still happens to be regressed as an end; in many more he is a means; in a third the ruling passion is the protection of department industry. A large proportion of the instructors are novices, trained solely, not for secondary or college work, but for highly specialized research; many, too, are forever debarred from gaining professional insights by the great university superstition that to know is to be prepared to teach. Add to this the general underlying assumption that all Freshman and Sophomore studies are preparatory, not in the sense in which three good meals today

are preparatory to three meals tomorrow, but in a technical, professional sense, and one can hardly shake off the fear that the junior colleges, instead of saving and perpetuating college aims and ideals, will succumb to universitizing influences and introduce pre-legal, pre-medical, pre-engineering, pre-Ph.D. courses, all of them naturally dominated by the universities, while pro-student courses will be rare—too rare to do much for the vocation of becoming human.

There is thus precious little that would justify university pharisaism and a great deal to call for the attitude of the publican. At this point we may well say, *His opus, hic labor est*. Fortunately the universities, if they are to thrive as universities, need the junior colleges just as much as the junior colleges need articulation with universities. For this reason alone, if there were no others, I am optimistic enough to believe that, while the junior colleges will be influenced for the good of all concerned in the direction of adequate standards of scholarship, the universities, influenced in turn by the junior colleges, will recognize in the work of the Freshman and Sophomore years the continuation and culmination of secondary education and will reshape themselves accordingly. One desideratum of such re-forming would be, of course, the appointment of professionally trained college professors to replace the inexperienced instructor, who now has neither a living wage nor the work he wants to do and is prepared for. At the University of California an interchange of instructors between junior colleges and the University has been sanctioned already, and I do not believe I am overtaxing my imagination when I think of the possibility of calling distinguished junior-college teachers to college chairs at Berkeley; and of course not only for services to Freshmen and Sophomores. At any rate, if what I called a while ago the higher union of German and English university aims—an American union, for short—is ever to be brought about for the senior college or, if you prefer, the first two years of a university, graduate schools of the German type must cease to be the only source of teacher supply.

If we turn now for a last moment from the state-supported and state-controlled school agencies to those serving the same ultimate ends of progressive national preparedness without the advantages

and disadvantages of such support and control, we find, I think, instead of divergence of interests with respect to junior colleges, only the same good reasons for promoting them and for making the changes necessary for educationally organic articulation. He who runs may read the significance of the fact that the state university of California and the University of Chicago have been on the road, side by side, to the same goal these many years, and that they have been joined in word and deed by another pair of the same sort, Leland Stanford Junior University and the state university of Missouri. We find, furthermore, that the non-state university-colleges can move faster, if they will, than state institutions. Stanford, for example, has put a limit on the size of its Freshman and Sophomore classes and may of course, if it chooses, do away with them entirely. As for the first-class colleges—long may they live, and God bless them—their noble ideals of the higher education alone should guarantee their allegiance to the junior-college idea. How little they have to fear is well illustrated by Pomona College, which, although situated where junior colleges are at present overabundant, has had to do as Stanford has done in the matter of numbers. This fact tends to show, incidentally, how very subordinate the causal connection is between the presence or absence of established higher institutions of learning and the demand for public junior colleges. The same college illustrates also how the older aims and methods of a more or less static culture may be transformed into the aims and methods of a modern dynamic education and how in consequence the differences between the last two college years and the first two university years tend to become differences of emphasis merely, while the line represented by the Bachelor's degree tends to become imaginary for those going on to universities for professional training whether of the research or of the applied-science type.

And so I, for one, cannot but hold to the faith that the junior college will be accepted by the nation and will be wholesomely developed as an integral part both of the system of public education and of the larger house with many mansions, American education, to the building of which must be devoted many gifts but one spirit.